

# **T** News Letter **TDARS**

G3ZME  
G6ZME

**TELFORD AND DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY**

[www.TDARS.org.uk](http://www.TDARS.org.uk)

FOUNDED 1969

[www.TelfordHamfest.co.uk](http://www.TelfordHamfest.co.uk)

Issue 261

Jan / Feb 2014

[www.TDARS.org.uk](http://www.TDARS.org.uk)

## *Programme*

[www.telfordhamfest.co.uk](http://www.telfordhamfest.co.uk)

- January 22 Video Evening from the RSGB cellars . . .
- January 26 (Sunday) **GX6ZME/P—Location Attingham Park (Nr Shrews.) (M0JZH/2E0CHV)**
- January 29 Web SDR demo. [Online Web Receivers] - such as Hack Green
- February 5 Committee Meeting and GX3ZME On-the-Air
- February 12 Annual Under-a-Five Construction Competition
- February 16 (Sunday) **GX6ZME/P Kite antenna event—location TBA (M0JZH/2E0CHV)**
- February 19 Summits on the Air: Guest speaker Richard Newstead G3CWI
- February 26 Indoor Bowls competition: Starting 7pm
- March 5 Committee Meeting and GX3ZME On-the-Air
- March 12 Annual Main Construction Competition
- March 19 TDARS Portable & Contesting ambitions and plans 2014
- March 26 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
- March 30 (Sunday) **GX6ZME/P Lightweight—QRP . Mitchell's Fold Stone Circle, SW Shrops.**
- April 2 Committee Meeting and GX3ZME On-the-Air
- April 9 International Marconi Day (Tywyn) GB8MD) Preparations. See Page 6
- April 16 Testing the Club Winter Projects. Bring them along !
- April 23 Ten Minute Topics—audience participation, please.
- April 26 (Fri-Sunday) **International Marconi Day at Tywyn—GB8MD**
- April 30 Special Antenna Demonstration event (we hope . . . .) *Details later*  
*For Amateur Radio Exam Training—enquiries to Mike G3JKX (01952 299677)*  
*For Morse Training and Morse Proficiency Tests Martyn G3UKV or Eric M0KZB.*  
*For Equipment Loans & Returns contact Simon 2E0CHV or Don 2E0DSN*  
[Radio Amateur Exams- Latest: www.tdars.org.uk/html/training.html](http://www.tdars.org.uk/html/training.html)

## Editorial

Every now-and-then someone has a bright idea, which no one's suggested before, but which seems worth trying out. The case of 'QST' Magazine which TDARS has subscribed to for many years is a case in point. "QST" is the in-house magazine of the ARRL, the national amateur radio organisation of the USA, and of course it's interesting as a different perspective on our hobby from the other side of the Atlantic. It also contains numerous reviews, construction and antenna articles of interest to us all, which don't appear in the UK. Don 'FHM has suggested that we have a list of all TDARS members who would like to read "QST" on a regular basis, because at present a few members see it, and then it disappears! Jim 'UGL receives the mag from the States, and then passes it on. I will make a list of who would like to read it, and then we can circulate it week by week to the next available person on the list. If each reader adds his/her call-sign to the front cover as it passes around, then we'll know who has not yet seen it, based on a list which will be available at the club. So, let's give it a try with the next issue.

I was delighted on Sunday to have Paul M0PNN call round to my QTH, with the intention of taking a 12 words-per-minute Morse Proficiency Test. He brought his own keyer, and his FT817 rig as the audio oscillator. I didn't realise that you can use this transceiver as a CW oscillator, without actually transmitting; it can be set to do this via the keyer menu. I must try it some time! Anyway, we had a warm-up session at about 12 wpm, quickly moved up to 15 wpm which Paul comfortably achieved, and then I suggested we try 20wpm, which equates to an overall speed of 100 characters and spaces per minute. At this point, I should explain that we used the 'QSO style' of sending and receiving, which includes all the letters of the alphabet, plus some numerals and basic punctuation in a QSO format. (candidates can opt to have plain language to send/receive, usually from the pages of RadCom.) I sent a different 'warm-up' piece, and Paul almost reached the required receiving standard (6 errors allowed in about 2 minutes of sending); he then sent some back to me. Pause for deep breath—and then away we went with the actual test. I sent the chosen 'QSO' text, and he then transmitted the matching reply QSO text. SUCCESS ! Paul achieved 20 wpm, under the same test conditions and rules as the old DTI (government) morse test that existed until 2003. Nothing more: nothing less. CONGRATULATIONS! Paul has received an attractive Morse Proficiency Certificate, signed by the Chairman.

If anyone else wants to try their hand at earning a morse proficiency certificate, please let me know. We can offer endorsement at any speed, from 5 words-per-minute upwards, and as stated, you can opt for 'QSO' style format, or plain English text. The test can take place at a mutually acceptable venue, or at the club QTH after 7 pm on a Wednesday meeting night.

MIV

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**TELFORD & DISTRICT AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY**

**CHAIRMAN:** Derek Southey G0EYX (01785 604904)

**VICE-CHAIRMAN:** Martyn Vincent (01952 255416)

**SECRETARY:** Mike Street G3JKX (01952 299677)

**TREASURER:** Jim Wakenell G8UGL (01952 684173)

**CURATOR** : Simon 2E0CHV (01588 673974) (note new number)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Martyn Vincent G3UKV (01952 255416)

**PUBLICITY :** Dave GOCER (01630 638699 or 07971 416940, leave msg)

**Committee:** Richard G0VXG; Simon G0UFE; Eric M0KZB; Martin 2E0TRO; John M0JZH; Brian G6UDX;

Trophies/Certs: G3UKV; QSL Manager Paul M0PNN; Assist. Curator: Don 2E0DSN

# *Qtc: News & Information*



**TDARS MEETINGS EVERY WEDNESDAY AT LITTLE WENLOCK VILLAGE HALL UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE ON THE FRONT PAGE PROGRAMME.**

**ROOM BOOKED FROM 7PM - 10PM.**

**MEETINGS USUALLY COMMENCE AT 8PM**

**Please note: A current membership card must be shown to borrow TDARS equipment. Please return borrowed equipment promptly .**

The **TDARS AGM** takes place at the end of March (26th), and the Society is on the lookout for a new Secretary, since Mike G3JKX is stepping down after a very honourable 18 years in the post. It is a very important job in any society, and hopefully someone will take up the mantle. There are occasional letters to be written and sent, but far less than in previous times, since emails are the order of the day. Minutes of monthly Committee (incl. HamFest) meetings to record and circulate, along with our programme of events, a copy of which is sent to the RSGB (email, of course) for publishing. After that, the role is really up to the individual, but not too onerous for someone to take on.

A new series of **morse classes** have started, with Eric M0KZB, assisted by Paul M0PNN organising two ability levels – beginners and improvers. About 18 (members and non-members of tdars) have signed up so far. Contact Eric or Paul for more information, or to join in the fun. 2 metre FM is the usual mode, but there are variations as lessons develop. Eric has developed a personalised email approach to motivate the individual to ensure success, so long as you continue to practise. Provisional days: Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday evenings, on 144.6 MHz.



John M0JZH and Simon 2E0CHV have circulated details of **proposed portable events for 2014**, with at least one event per month. These are indicated on the front (programme) page of the Newsletter in **RED** print, and follow on from the very successful and popular series last year. Full list at time of writing—see page 7. (My personal favourite in 2013 was entitled “from the bog to your log”, which also featured on the appropriate GX6ZME/P QSL card and QRZ.com website!, and probably repeated next December- Ed).

The **G100RSGB activity** from TDARS in October was a great success, despite the weather. The item included in the last Newsletter eventually surfaced in the pages of Rad-Com (January, Pg 68). Members of RSGB can download a special **Centenary Certificate** to commemorate their own involvement in the station (go to members' pages, centenary, for download details) and TDARS has also adapted the same certificate (see Pg 6) for non RSGB members of TDARS which can be printed out. **Requests to Martyn G3UKV**, please. On a related topic, Paul 'PNN worked **Gx100RSGB** on a total of 90 HF/VHF band slots, which places him 7th out of 200 UK stations listed on the RSGB “Leaderboard”. Well done! Martyn G3UKV is 87th on the same listing, with 34 HF/VHF band slots.

A new **winch and Kevlar rope** has been purchased for one of the Club's mobile masts. This will be fitted in the near future. It features a braking system that operates both whilst winding up and lowering, which should be useful with the hefty 6 metre LFA antenna, as well as making the process safer.

Following Mike G3JKX's request last year, a **new venue** for the various **radio amateur exams** has been offered and accepted, at Harper Adams University campus near Newport. It has not yet been assessed for suitability by the RSGB, but should meet all the required criteria.

Quick reminder that the **'Under-a-Fiver' and 'Main Construction' competitions** take place on February 12 and March 12 respectively. Please bring something (anything!) along that you have constructed in electronic or radio areas in the past year. It's more of a sharing evening than a hard competitive event, although there are 3 trophies up for grabs, including a 'Beginners' Trophy awarded to someone new to electronic construction. Last year's winners were G0ASP and G3UKV. The Beginner's trophy is still sat in the cupboard as there were no entries in that category. Come on, guys. . .here it is >>>



At the annual **Christmas Dinner**, there were 27 members and their guests at The Duck. We had a great evening, and I personally had the best meal I can remember at that venue (Trout fillet starter, beef for main, cheesecake/icecream pud). The following week Derek kindly provided **mulled wine and mince pies**, at HQ, which has become a tdars tradition, and about 30 members were present for another enjoyable evening. Pictures on our website.

Richard G0VXG has been up to his **"MAD" (Miles Ahead Developments) projects**, again—this time for the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. Following on from two TDARS events last year at Blist's Hill, he has developed and made a unique box-of-tricks to bring a Post Office project to life at the museum. The Trust has been loaned an original telegraph sounder, used in the nineteenth and early 20th century for passing messages around the country. As it stands, it's rather un-inspiring, but with 24 volts applied, and the option of a sine wave tone—it comes to life. He has also programmed in 6 pre-recorded messages, so that visitors can hear what a telegraph morse machine would have sounded like. To make it even more realistic, visitors can send their own morse, using a 'crib' card and old morse key, to hear the clicks (or tone) from the sounder. The staff are delighted with this unit, and of course it is good publicity for TDARS. ...\_ . \_ . \_ . \_ . / \_ . \_ . \_ . \_ . \_ . Richard! Apparently the sounder is only on loan for a year, but hopefully this will be extended indefinitely when the lenders see how it's being used. See pictures next page.

When Eric M0KZB came to demonstrate **reception of PSK data** signals on a Raspberry Pi computer to members (Nov. 27th), all that could be received was white noise and the odd QRO broadcast station. He had set up a couple of tuned antennas, but it was hopeless and frustrating. Since then, checks with a handheld SW receiver have shown that the solar panels installed on the LWVH roof last year have effectively made the club meeting room RF proof. For future demos, therefore, it is essential to run a coax link to the external HF doublet. This can either be at the station hook-up box (at rear of kitchen area, used monthly for GX3ZME), or via a coax switch and drop-down coax lead located by the loft hatch over the meeting room itself.



@g3zme

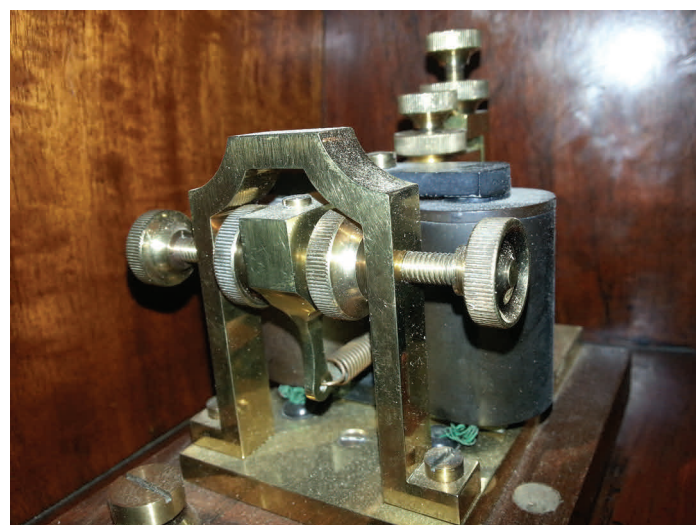
**GB3TF has had a minor change** to its logic, following QRM complaints from the GB3EH group in Warwickshire (again—"Methinks thou dost complain too much"—W.S.). It now transmits a morse "ID" every 15 minutes, instead of every 5 minutes. Sounds easy, but actually it was NOT. Thanks to Richard 'VXG, Jim 'UGL and the author of the logic GD4HOZ for making this change.

Paul M0PNN has modified a **large number of Kenwood PMR sets** to operate across the 2 metre band in 12.5 KHz FM steps. They had been thrown out as U/S, but Paul found a single fault in almost all of them that simply required re-soldering a component. He has generously donated two sets to TDARS, and invites any member to contact him if they wish to buy one of the remaining rigs for just £25. They show frequency, CTCSS tone, repeater offset etc etc.

**ANYONE HOLDING A T.D.A.R.S. Trophy is asked to return it to the Club in the near future, ready for engraving and presentation at the A.G.M. in March.**

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**Post Office morse Telegraph sounder**, now at Blist's Hill. Two connections to telegraph line (L/H side above photo). Sounder mechanism, with solenoid action—detail R/H photo. The open wooden enclosure 'amplifies' the clicks from the solenoid mechanism. Although morse characters were originally cut into a narrow strip of paper, fed from a large reel, operators soon found they could read the morse directly from the clicks made by the sounder, and immediately record the incoming message, without the marked paper strip. Wonder what happened if they were distracted whilst taking down a message ? Presumably they would ask for a re-send of the message, using the morse key shown above. Richard's (G0VXG) "MAD" project is not shown here, but it should make the exhibits come to life for visitors in a unique way, both receiving and sending.

#### **A few contest outcomes:**

**IOTA July 2013**— G0CER (Dave) 10th of 52 in single op.,SSB section, low power. 185 QSOs

**IOTA July 2013-** M0PNN (Paul) 6th of 19 single op, CW/SSB section. 344 QSOs.

**UKAC 2013**—contributors G8UGL, 2E0DTB, 2E0CHV/P, G3UKV, G0CER. All bands 50MHz to 10 GHz. **Club position** 19th out of 110, with 'normalised' 439 points score.

**Overall:** G0CER 2242 pts, 56th of 574 entrants. G3UKV 812 pts, 161st of 574. 2E0CHV/P 208, 316th of 574. G8UGL 182, 329th of 574. 2E0DTB 49, 455th of 574.

**Club points and position out of total entries, by band:**

50MHz 7331, 29/75. <> 70MHz 3866, 10/49. <> 144MHz 8880, 31/97 <> 432MHz 4964 35/73 <> 1296MHz 1559, 29/45 <> 2320MHz 2738, 10/11 <> 3400MHz 667, 5/5 <> 5760MHz 500, 4/4 <> 10368MHz 999, 6/7. Can we improve on that in 2014? More club entrants make the difference !

12					
13	Band	2011	2012	2013	TDARS Members entering in 2013
14	6m	20 of 56	24 of 74	29 of 75	g0cer, g8ugl, g3ukv
15	4m	12 of 31	16 of 37	10 of 49	g0cer, g3ukv
16	2m	32 of 78	35 of 92	31 of 97	g0cer, 2e0chv/p, g8ugl, 2e0dtb
17	70cm	21 of 70	28 of 64	35 of 73	g3ukv, g0cer, g8ygl, 2e0dtb
18	23cm	31 of 32	21 of 37	29 of 45	g3ukv
19	SHF	7 of 9	8 of 11	10 of 11	g3ukv
20					

Dave G0CER has devised an ExCel spreadsheet showing members' results over the past 3 years. Analyse, analyse . . .



The other projects have not been forgotten. There's the QRSS Transmitter kit and LFA antenna (c/o M0PNN), and the 'Plasma Nuller' noise reduction project. (c/o G3UKV). PW have delayed publication of the possible alternative circuit for this, so Martyn has



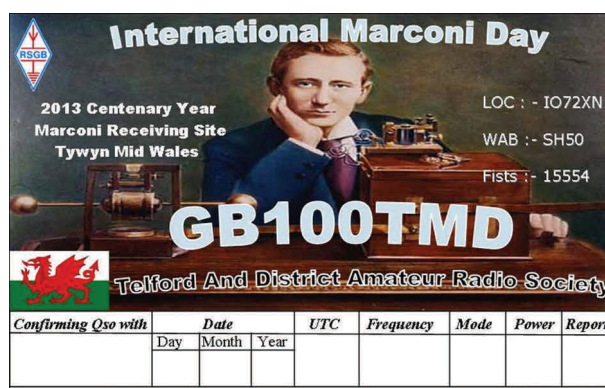
And now an item from Simon, 2E0CHV . . .

Just a few words to remind you that TDARS are once again planning to activate the old Marconi Receive Station at Tywyn, Gwynedd in 2014 to mark International Marconi Day with GB8MD. The 2014 event takes place on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April**.

IMD is a 24 hour event held annually to celebrate the birth of Guglielmo Marconi on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1874. This is not a contest, but an opportunity for amateurs to make point to point contact with historic Marconi sites around the globe using only the HF bands. The sites are activated by clubs or groups of individuals and a certificate is available for those who wish to claim it for contacting a certain number of sites.

Last year being the centenary of the construction of the Tywyn site, we pulled out all the stops and put on a large station with the special call sign GB100TMD and made just over 1500 QSOs! I am currently not sure on the scale of activity planned for this year, it really depends on the number of bodies we can muster from within our ranks. But the most important thing is we all have fun!

So be warned, the New Year has arrived and we shall be planning and recruiting volunteers, be they experienced or newly licensed, you are all welcome!



**RSGB Certificate available to  
all those who helped at the  
G100RSGB stations in October.**

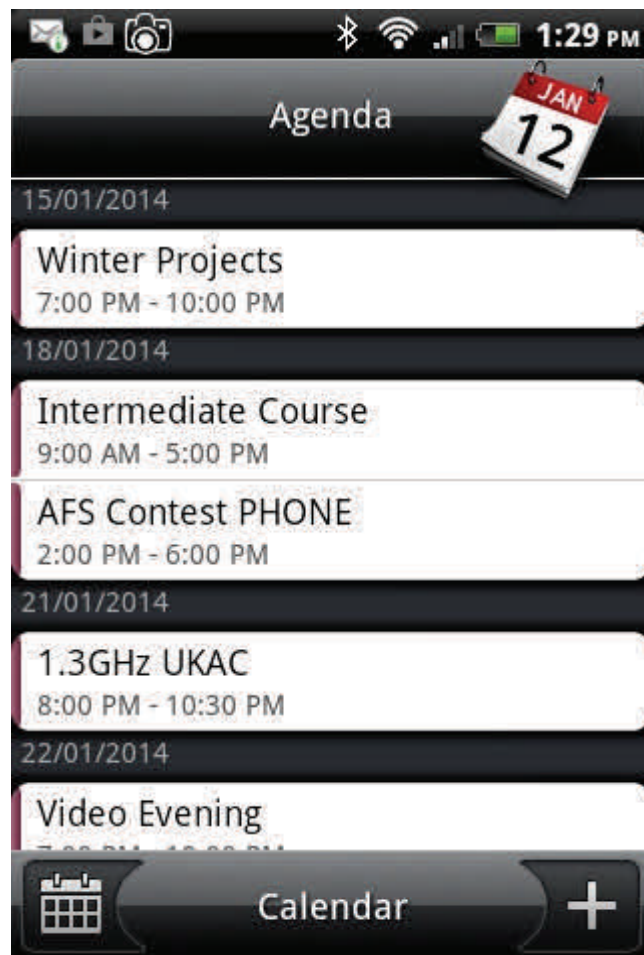
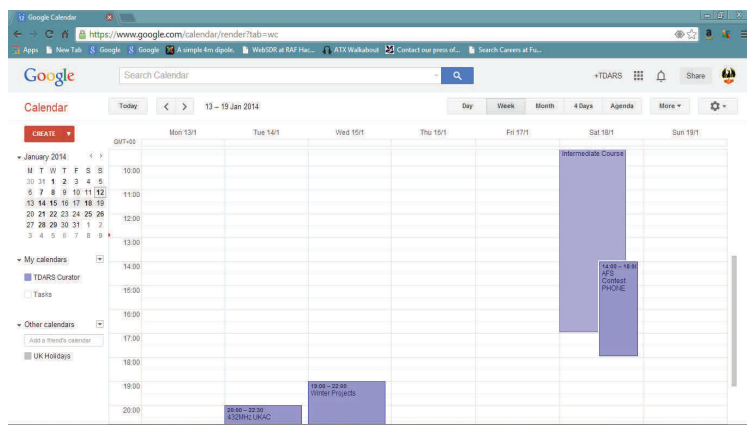
**Some of those attending the Christmas Meal at The Duck at Allscott in December**



From John M0JZH :

"On Wednesday, I mentioned about the calendar for **Google calendar**, including its availability on Android phones. This is available for me to share if members wish by emailing me :

**m0jzh@yahoo.co.uk**. It has quite a lot in it - maybe too much??? It has all the TDARS dates as discussed at the meetings right up to end of April. It has our portable operations dates, and all the HF and VHF competitions from the RSGB. I have included a snapshot from my computer that you may wish to use. I also have a screenshot from my phone."



### **From Simon 2E0CHV and John M0JZH:**

"First of all hope you have all had a Merry Christmas and wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2014.

As some of you are well aware, John M0JZH and I try and organise some portable events throughout the year, mostly using the club call GX6ZME/P. Find below a list of events which John and I are either planning or supporting others on this year. Of course as always you are all welcome to attend and indeed help to organise these .

**Sunday 26th January:** Venue Attingham Park, nr Shrewsbury.

**Sunday 16th February:** Kite portable in Market Drayton area.

**Sunday 30th March:** Lightweight QRP Portable at Mitchells Fold Stone Circle.

**Saturday 26th April:** International Marconi Day at Tywyn.

Setting up on Friday 25th and packing up the station on 27th.

**10th - 11th May:** VHF weekend (proposed for Little Wenlock playing field, TBC). A chance to try the new monster 6m lfa beam in readiness for 50mhz Trophy and a chance to play on all the VHF bands.

**21st - 22nd June:** 50mhz Trophy (G0UFE i/c)

**5th - 6th July** VHF NFD (G3UKV i/c).

**Sunday 3rd August:** 432mhz Low Power Contest.

**18th - 19th October:** Jamboree on the Air at Wellington Scout Group.

**Sunday 16th November:** Shrewsbury Battlefield TBC

**Sunday 7th December:** Portable at the Bog.

***We do hope that many of you will get involved,  
or visit us on these dates***

### **CAPTION COMPETITION —**

An occasional item for the Newsletter.

This photo was taken recently. Your editor is offering a small prize for the best humorous CAPTION provided by tdars members to accompany this shot of Peter; (Yes, he has agreed to it.) Perhaps the content might be along the lines of 'sweet dreams', or ??



Send to Martyn  
ukv@ukv.me.uk  
(or in person)  
by 28th Feb.  
latest.



## *An Obituary printed in the London Times.....*

*Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend,*

*Common Sense ,*

*Who has been with us for many years.  
No one knows for sure how old he was,  
since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red  
tape.  
He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons  
as:*

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;*
- Why the early bird gets the worm;*
- Life isn't always fair;*
- And maybe it was my fault.*

*Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies  
(Don't spend more than you can earn)  
and reliable strategies  
(Adults, not children, are in charge).  
His health began to deteriorate rapidly,  
When well-intentioned but overbearing regulations  
were set in place.  
Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment  
For kissing a classmate;  
Teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after  
lunch;  
and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student,  
Only worsened his condition.*

*Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers  
For doing the job that they themselves had failed to do  
In disciplining their unruly children.*

*It declined even further when schools were required to get  
parental consent  
To administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student;  
But could not inform parents when a student  
Became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.*

*Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became  
businesses;  
and criminals received better treatment than their victims.*

*Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend  
yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar  
could sue you for assault.*

*Common Sense finally gave up the will to live,  
After a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee  
was hot.*

*She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge  
settlement.*

*Common Sense was preceded in death, -by his parents,  
Truth and Trust,  
-by his wife, Discretion,  
-by his daughter, Responsibility,  
and - by his son, Reason.*

*He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;  
- I Know My Rights  
- I Want It Now  
- Someone Else Is To Blame  
I'm A Victim  
Pay me for Doing Nothing*

*Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was  
gone.*

**Sent in by Don, M0FHM**

## Capacitive Touch Key By Norman G0ASP

Following on from the simple touch keys is the touch sensitive solution. This is the iambic capacitive touch sensitive key which uses a 3v battery, drawing minimum current.

The design and PCB is produced by M0UKD. Check out his web page, which also has other useful items. The PCB costs £17 + £1.50 P&P, not worth buying the kit (smd components) as it is only £3 cheaper.

The blue box from Maplins has ribs inside which easily allows everything to fit inside. See Photos. The "make do" touch paddles are barrel hinges from Home Base.

N.B. The weight to the key is added by car wheel balance adhesive ones.



**Is of Man—Proposed mini DX-pedition**, where you can 'Do Your Own Thing', from MF to microwaves.  
**Likely dates:** Thurs 26 June to Mon. 30 June.  
Ferry out Liverpool to Douglas 11:15 (arr 14:00) Thurs.  
Ferry In Douglas to L'pool 15:00 (arr 17:45) Mon.  
**Return fare cost:** car + 2 adults = £194 (as at 17 Jan.)  
**Other costs:** travel, camping, (or B&B if you prefer), food.  
**All Welcome**—incl newcomers—we don't bite! **Contact Martyn G3UKV.**



**Thanks for Newsletter input this time from Simon 2E0CHV, Rob M0TOY, Don M0FHM, Richard G0VXG, John M0JZH, Dave G0CER. Next edition Mid March.**